

DIGITAL STRATEGY

2019-22

‘Strengthening our digital foundations’

Introduction and context

During 2020, the RCM reaches an historic milestone by completing the biggest-ever expansion and transformation of its estate. The College recognises the potential of digital technology to underpin a further transformation, initially by maximising the use and development of relevant learning technologies for our existing students, and in due course by enabling a vastly greater reach for all levels of RCM education programmes.

In order to achieve this vision, we will firstly need to modernize and strengthen our technology infrastructure and begin to transform the way we work. As was the case with the RCM’s buildings ten years ago, parts of our technology infrastructure are outdated, unsuitable for modern uses, and pose an increasing risk. We also need a person-centred approach, with the right training, support and collaboration to ensure students, professors and other staff are comfortable with digital tools and approaches and prepared for future opportunities.

By proactively focussing now on infrastructure, simplification, culture, collaboration, training and support, we can establish a strong long-term basis to exploit the potential of technological advances for educational and other purposes, and to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of every aspect of our organisation.

This will prepare the way for future innovation in coming years and, ultimately, a newly global, digitally-enabled RCM – suitably equipped and positioned to fulfil its mission to educate, inform, encourage and support the advancement of music throughout the world, as outlined in its founding vision:

Objects of the Royal College of Music (as set out in the 1883 Charter):

- a) the advancement of the Art of Music by means of a central teaching and examining body charged with the duty of providing musical instruction of the highest class, and of rewarding with academical degrees and certificates of proficiency and otherwise persons, whether educated or not at the College, who on examination may prove themselves worthy of such distinctions and evidences of attainment; and
- b) the promotion and supervision of such musical instruction in schools and elsewhere, as may be thought most conducive to the cultivation and dissemination of the Art of Music in the United Kingdom; and
- c) generally the encouragement and promotion of the cultivation of music as an art throughout the world.

External context

New undergraduates arriving at the RCM are now true ‘digital natives’, having grown up with advanced digital devices and services deeply embedded in their school education and personal development. Additionally, their future careers in music will depend on and, in some cases, be defined by digital technologies we can’t yet foresee.

While the classical music world retains much of its historic core, technology is enabling increased innovation in the profession and conservatoires cannot afford to ignore this. In a globally competitive higher education market, successful institutions must not only deliver and support their educational programmes with up to date technologies, but also position

themselves as the digital R&D hubs for industries and professions, in order to provide new opportunities for their graduates and to continue making an impact in the world at large.

Whereas five years ago the RCM could justifiably claim to be sector-leading in its use and implementation of technology, several other conservatoires have since developed their technology provision very significantly (often in tandem with new building projects or growth in student numbers), highlighting the need for the RCM to invest more in this area.

Furthermore, external trends require the RCM to adapt and update its technology approaches, for example to address the growing threat from cyber crime and respond to changing regulations and legislation (especially relating to privacy).

The revision of this strategy following Directorate feedback is taking place at a time (Spring 2020) when the RCM's physical buildings are closed due to the 2020 coronavirus pandemic. This unprecedented event has already changed the way the RCM uses technology in learning, teaching and running the organisation. It is also likely to affect short- and medium-term project planning. Therefore, this strategy needs to be especially flexible and kept under continual review.

Long-term objectives

The strategy outlined here represents a 'foundation' stage, with the objective of building a stronger technology infrastructure, developing a more "digitally-savvy" organisation, and, crucially, a sustainable financial model for keeping our technology and training up-to-date, with reduced reliance on one-off capital funding rounds.

If successful, by 2022, every member of the RCM will have access to the digital tools they need to perform at their best, and will feel as comfortable, adept and well supported using technology to achieve their goals as they currently do in the non-digital sphere. This will enable us to move into a second phase of strategic development (2022-25), focussing on innovation and transformation. We will have much-needed capacity and necessary infrastructure to experiment, trial new ways of working and determine how technology can deliver impactful change and growth.

Ultimately, in a third phase (perhaps from 2025), this strategy aspires to ensure the RCM's future success as a modern, agile, connected institution that exploits technology effectively to maximise its impact and achieve its core aims, thereby securing its 'global future'.



Strategic alignment and methodology

The starting point for this strategy is the overall [RCM Strategic Plan 2017-2027](#), which contains three year and ten year visions. Additional strategies which have informed this document include the Artistic Strategy, Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, Research Strategy, Estates Strategy and previous versions of the ICT Strategy, Studio strategies and Digital Strategy.

The recent BMus programme review has been a continual source of referral in the development of this strategy, recognising the new role of digital support and subjects in the undergraduate programme (also emphasised in the 2019 QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Music) and the digital pathway which now forms part of that programme for the first time.

This document is intended as a point of reference and co-ordination for all the RCM's digital activities and investment over the next 3 years. It therefore covers the strategic priorities for the three digital teams (Technology, Production and Learning), replacing any previous individual strategy documents in those areas. It also references a range of digital-dependent strategic priorities owned by other departments.

Steps in creating this strategy were as follows:

1. A review of the previous Digital Strategy (2016-19), to identify successes of the past 3 years which should now be built on, and objectives that have not been completed but are still relevant.
2. Collation of the RCM's risk register and recent internal audits relating to digital provision, especially any incomplete recommendations.
3. A strategic review of current technology provision, aspirations and needs by Jisc consultants (Spring 2019).
4. A series of workshops with staff and students, clustered around 4 business and thematic areas (June 2019).
5. A student survey conducted at the end of the 2018-19 academic year.
6. Drafting and review of the strategy by the Head of Digital, Digital Learning Manager and other managers.
7. Review and sign-off by the Artistic Director (who has Directorate responsibility for digital/technology).

Unresolved questions

Delivering our digital aims comes with challenges as well as opportunities. Some unresolved questions are already apparent, and others will no doubt emerge as we work to deliver this strategy. These include:

- **Determining the right funding model**
This strategy includes some major projects for which significant fundraising and capital investment will be required. But digital technology is an ever-changing field that requires continual investment, so as technology becomes more important to the RCM's success and our ambitions grow, we must secure long term continuing funding and not simply rely on periodic capital or fundraising bids. Finding the right balance between capital and operational funding is just as important as the level of overall funding required.
- **Determining our approach to the proliferation of devices (BYOD policy)**
Over the past decade personal devices have developed considerably, offering exciting new possibilities for students, professors and staff. We know that the majority of student work is already undertaken on phones and tablets. However, the proliferation of devices being used has stretched our helpdesk provision beyond its current SLA and creates new challenges for data security. We therefore need to decide whether we will formally support a wide range of users' own devices and strengthen the effectiveness and security of their use (through a new 'Bring Your Own Device' policy), or provide students and staff with devices which we can control more fully. This choice could have an enormous impact on how we deliver various objectives and must be resolved early in the period covered by this strategy.

Review of recent progress (2016-19)

Organisational and governance transformation

A significant innovation in 2016 was the appointment of the RCM's first Digital Learning Manager, as part of a project to implement a new eLearning platform, Canvas (eventually implemented as 'learn.rcm'). This post was augmented in 2017 by a graduate intern, subsequently replaced by a full-time co-ordinator.

Bringing the three digital teams together in January 2018 delivered a number of strategic benefits, including:

- improved AV support in classrooms
- Technology staff supporting the adoption of new networked technologies in the studios and for videoconferencing
- a joint approach to technology teaching and training for students and staff
- more integrated management of our digital learning platforms and resources.

Additionally, the Head of Digital now sits on a small number of strategic committees including Senate Executive Committee and the Estates Committee, helping ensure the digital agenda remains aligned with strategic priorities in those areas.

The current digital team structure and remit is described in more detail in Appendix 1.

Infrastructure transformation

Since 2016 a range of significant projects have been undertaken to improve the College's technology infrastructure, including:

- Design and installation of improved technology facilities in the new Percussion Suite in the south building
- Re-routing and upgrading of technical cabling in the Amaryllis Fleming Concert Hall as a result of demolition of ancillary spaces
- Move of Composition and Production Suites to temporary accommodation in the Blomfield Building, due to demolition of former facilities as part of the Courtyard project
- Migration of essential servers and data storage to new hardware
- Move of the RCM's data centre from Imperial College to a specialist provider in Slough
- Design, procurement and installation of network and Wi-Fi in the East Courtyard development and Jay Mews
- Advising and consulting on design and installation of AV technical cabling and facilities in the Courtyard development
- A major upgrade of the RCM's concert recording/streaming capabilities, ready for integration with the new Courtyard performance spaces, including the creation of a new Video Production Suite, System T digital audio mixing system and Dante networked audio solution connecting the studios to all performance spaces.

Applications transformation

Also during the period 2016-19, several significant software projects have been delivered:

- Upgrading to **Office 365** cloud software for all staff and students
- Procurement of a new fast storage, recording and management solution for video production (**Editshare**)
- Selection and implementation of a new e-Learning platform (VLE), **learn.rcm**
- A complete rebuild of the **RCM website** led by Marketing & Communications team
- Rebuild of the College's central underlying applications database (**SSTRESS**) using updated technologies
- Upgrades to the HR system (**iTrent**), with increased self-service capability
- Migration of the internal video platform **RCMstream** to the cloud

A new learning and teaching role

The previous digital strategy and the projects delivered above have led to closer integration and engagement with many areas of RCM activity, but most notably learning and teaching, including:

- Co-curation and teaching by digital staff of the new Performance in the Digital Age course.
- Closer partnership with individual faculties to tailor their use of learn.rcm and other resources to their individual needs.
- Taking ownership of the videoconferencing programme to ensure it is as effective as possible for students involved.

Production innovation

- Move to full HD (1080p) filming of student performances and recording sessions.
- Refining filming equipment and techniques in and around the Belle Shenkman Studio, including 4K capabilities for promotional films.
- Significant improvements in quality of audio and video capture made possible by the new audio and video concert recording facilities.

Strategic areas for 2019-22





Four strategic areas

This plan is organised into four areas aligned to the RCM's overall strategy. In each case, the primary focus is on groundwork to enable innovation in the future, but urgent short-term needs and 'quick-wins' are also addressed where necessary.

The areas are as follows, and are outlined in more detail on the following pages:

- 1. Learning, teaching and performance**
To develop the RCM's digital provision for learning, teaching and performance to match the high quality of its existing programmes and physical estate, ensuring all learners have access to the facilities and services they need and expect from a world-leading modern conservatoire.
- 2. Business sustainability and innovation**
To ensure the RCM's technology infrastructure and services are sufficiently robust, safe and up-to-date to support the organisation's priorities, business continuity and sustainability, and where possible, to exploit digital opportunities to reduce costs and generate income.
- 3. Research, heritage and outreach**
To protect, curate and share the RCM's expertise, knowledge and heritage (especially its digital assets) through appropriate technologies, for the maximum benefit of current and future students, staff and external audiences.
- 4. Community and wellbeing**
To design and implement technology which benefits the RCM community, improving their individual and shared experience of the RCM by simplifying our digital services, digitally-enabling shared spaces and promoting increased collaboration.

Within each theme, the deliverables are categorised as follows:

-  **The 'Online RCM'**
Creating a coherent, straightforward and modern online environment for students, professors and staff, as an online counterpart to the physical campus and activities.
-  **Technical facilities for musicians**
Creating and developing the studios, music technology facilities and other specialist technology required on our campus to deliver modern, relevant music education for twenty-first century musicians.
-  **Technology backbone**
Updating our essential underlying essential IT systems such as servers, network infrastructure, security provision and connectivity, to support our current digital activities and future ambitions.
-  **Funding and sustainability**
Securing ongoing financing and sustainable investment to ensure we keep up to date with students' needs, while managing our costs and taking opportunities to generate revenue to offset them where we can.

Four enabling themes

In order to deliver the objectives of the strategy, some cultural and organisational change will be required, which can be broken down into four overarching themes:

- A. Developing a digital culture in the organisation**
To include: Leadership training, greater stakeholder engagement, technology 'system owners' in departments, targets for digital delivery or spending, more use of digital 'pioneers', industry accreditations, etc.
- B. Improving technology governance and compliance**
To include: Formalising governance and reporting (e.g. re-establishing a digital/technology Committee), review of senior roles and management structure, introduction of digital PMO function, etc.

C. **Improving digital capability and skills**

To include: more focus and investment on training for all staff, increased digital training for students, more proactive support provision, mandating completion of key courses, reward/recognition scheme for digital pioneers

D. **Securing ongoing investment in technology**

To include: working closely with Development to raise funds, moving our technology funding model from capital to revenue, exploring leasing and outsourcing options where appropriate.

Six delivery principles

All projects and activities which fall within this strategy will be evaluated to maximise adherence to the following principles:

1. Data protection by design and default
2. Increasing resilience and security
3. Simplifying user experience and system architecture
4. Delivering best value
5. Adopting cloud platforms wherever possible
6. Supporting environmental targets















Benefits and outcomes

The benefits for students and staff, and institutional benefits to the RCM, are listed below within each strategic area. Together, these form a summary of the ambitions and final deliverables for the present strategy and delivery timeframe.
















Author: **Matt Parkin**
Head of Digital

Approved by: **Stephen Johns**
Artistic Director









Late update: June 2020

Strategic area 1	Learning, teaching and performance
Overall aim	To develop the RCM's digital provision for learning, teaching and performance to match the high quality of its existing programmes and physical estate, ensuring all learners have access to the facilities and services they need and expect from a world-leading modern conservatoire.
RCM strategic context	"Digital technology plays an increasingly important supportive role in teaching, learning and performance ... The RCM will continue its investment in technology to enhance the learning and teaching experience, and to share its activities with stakeholders around the world" (RCM in 2020 – a three-year vision for the RCM)
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Digital priorities will be aligned with the RCM's learning and teaching strategy by working closely with Programme and Faculty leaders, embracing blended learning approaches and piloting new digital techniques and approaches directly with students and professors.  We will continue to develop, promote, streamline and support the use of effective technologies to enhance learning and teaching, including learn.rcm and RCMstream.  We will develop plans for the RCM to offer elements of its teaching online to learners around the world by partnering with other institutions and/or leading platforms in the online learning field, aiming to pilot at least one open or paid course by summer 2022.  We will explore how we can better support Junior Programmes to use technology to develop the RCM's links with, and support for, schools, parents and teachers, for example by developing courses and materials to support classroom teaching.  We will continue to improve our support for portable devices (smartphones, tablets etc) to allow students and staff to work where, when and how they wish.  The digital team will work with the RCM Library to continue adopting, and simplify access to, digital materials including ebooks, journals, streaming platforms and digital scores.  Technology teaching and training will become an integral part of all programmes.  We will provide targeted, short-form training for both academic and principal study teachers to increase their confidence and skills in using appropriate technologies  We will draw on the rich data available within our learning and other platforms to allow teaching staff to respond better to students' needs, by developing new analytics and measurement tools and implementing a meaningful reporting process.  We will explore the possibilities of creating specialist Masters-level courses in (a) classical music production and (b) multimedia composition and performance, aiming to launch modules or possibly full new courses in these areas by 2022.  We will embrace digital tools and programmes developed by the Centre for Performance Science (CPS), and work more closely with CPS to support future innovation.  Technical fit-out of the Courtyard will be funded and completed, including the provision of flexible multimedia rehearsal/performance facilities in the new Performance Studio.  We will improve our provision for self-op or 'one touch' recording in performance spaces and larger teaching rooms, for use by students and staff.  We will replace or refurbish existing technology-based teaching facilities including the Sibelius Room, Composition Suite and Production Suites, and develop new professional-grade facilities for students and teachers, including a self-op studio and edit suite.
Benefits to students and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Students' learning will be supported by high quality, simple-to-use digital tools and resources, matching their best experiences of technology outside the RCM. ✓ Through their programmes of study, students will be equipped to realise the potential of relevant technologies and exploit current and future digital opportunities in their careers. ✓ Teaching staff will be supported by an improved range of digital facilities and resources, including a rich, accessible library of RCM and external media content for use in teaching.










Benefits to the RCM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The RCM will be recognised for the effective use of technology in teaching and learning, one of the markers of a contemporary, forward-looking educational institution. ✓ Existing specialist courses such as Composition for Screen will be revitalised, and new strands such as production and multimedia will become more feasible. ✓ We will be well placed to start delivering courses to students remotely, allowing us to increase student numbers and income without increased physical space.
---------------------	--

Strategic area 2	Business sustainability and innovation
Overall aim	To ensure the RCM’s technology infrastructure and services are sufficiently robust, safe and up-to-date to support the organisation’s priorities, business continuity and sustainability, and where possible, to exploit digital opportunities to reduce costs and generate income.
RCM strategic context	“Development and alumni engagement supports strategic priorities, including estate, scholarships and academic initiatives, taking account of the potential for generating commercial income ... A robust sustainability programme secures the long-term financial future of the College.” (RCM in 2027 – a ten-year vision for the RCM)
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  The replacement of the existing Finance and Student Records platforms will be completed.  We will expand our software applications and development capacity with the initial aim of updating legacy on-premises business and e-learning applications with modern cloud equivalents, and subsequently keeping them up-to-date through continuous development.  To improve governance and ensure we have the right technology leadership and support in place for long term growth, we will review our organisational structure and roles, which is likely to include some overall growth in technology/digital roles by 2022.  We will engage with leadership training and strategic programmes offered by Jisc (such as the <u>Digital Leaders’ Programme</u> and the digital capabilities framework) and other suppliers  We will develop our approach to digital project and programme management in line with recent audit recommendations and the model established by the RCM Estates project team.  We will seek accreditation under the Government’s <u>Cyber Essentials</u> scheme.  We will update our login and security systems to improve security and streamline access.  We will revise and update our policies and procedures as technology and needs change.  We will replace or update end-of-life hardware and software, in particular the outdated parts of our internal network and server provision, giving priority to items which are no longer supported by manufacturers, including Windows 7, legacy Windows servers, Microsoft Access databases, the Muse intranet, core switches and firewall.  We will adopt a cloud-first approach to storage and software, to increase resilience, improve external access and reduce the need for physical servers and storage.  The digital department will work with Finance to review the funding model for technology, continuing the move to revenue-based models for hardware and software.  We will work with Development and Alumni Engagement to raise funds for digital initiatives, especially for student-facing recording, production and performance facilities.  We will recommence and expand the commercial activities of RCM Studios by offering commercial recording and filming in existing facilities and new spaces.  Where possible and appropriate, we will provide audio-visual and other technology support for external hires of RCM venues in order to generate income for the College.  Technology support staffing will be increased in order to deliver the aims of this strategy.
Benefits to students and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Technology used by staff and students will be more up-to-date, robust and secure. ✓ New approaches to funding will deliver improved, more up-to-date facilities.

Benefits to the RCM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The RCM will be more protected against cyber attacks and data breaches, with externally-validated assurance and/or certification. ✓ Moving to a revenue (OpEx) funding model will mean technical systems are kept up-to-date and help avoid critical risks, while also reducing the need for major CapEx bids. ✓ Income generated from recording, filming and external event support will assist long-term sustainability.
---------------------	--

Strategic area 3	Research, heritage and outreach
Overall aim	To protect, curate and share the RCM’s expertise, knowledge and heritage (especially its digital assets) through appropriate technologies, for the maximum benefit of current and future students, staff and external audiences.
RCM strategic context	“ [we will] Substantially raise the RCM’s national and international research profile [and] maximise the impact and dissemination of RCM research and knowledge resources to the widest range of beneficiaries both within and beyond the institution.” (RCM in 2027 – a ten-year vision for the RCM)
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  We will actively seek grant funding to embark on research into digitally-themed topics of importance to the classical music profession, such as digital audience development, audio-visual production, musicians’ wellbeing, or digitisation/preservation.  We will work with MarComms to continue to seek deeper engagement with audiences through digital channels and an increasingly heightened understanding of those audiences over time, allowing us to tailor and target content more effectively. We will find the best opportunities to share our knowledge, skills, performance and creative outputs with the wider world.  We will take a balanced approach to managing the production and dissemination of digital content, maintaining a robust editorial and curatorial strategy to ensure best quality. We will use evaluation provided by MarComms to prioritise formats and forums most appropriate for intended audiences and have a clear commissioning procedure for new content. This will help people across the RCM – including those without content production expertise – to provide valuable contributions and to identify the best ways of presenting their stories in an engaging fashion.  Our overall goal is to grow our digital audience through the best avenues available to us, raising brand awareness and contributing to student recruitment and commercial objectives. Continual review of available technologies, services and partnerships will support this, as will evaluation via MarComms of the impact of pilot schemes such as the Virtual Open Day in summer 2020 and the digital-first performance programme in autumn 2020, for which the Digital team is providing expert support. A thorough focus on quality of output will ensure brand perception and audience retention are high.  A project will be launched to preserve and/or digitise the RCM’s recording archives (analogue and digital) to secure them for future use by students, researchers and historians.  Building on the extensive digitisation programme undertaken by the RCM Museum, we will seek ways to make the RCM’s digital collections more widely available and integrate them more fully into both internal and public platforms.  The RCM’s current research data repository (ePrints) will be replaced to secure its content for future use and promote wider access to RCM research output.  A major project will be undertaken to modernise and rationalise data storage and backup across the RCM, using cloud platforms to improve security, search and accessibility, with an emphasis on improving the use, sharing and management of digital media assets.
Benefits to students and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Students and researchers will have more straightforward access to RCM archive materials. ✓ Staff will be able to search, find and use RCM digital assets in a controlled way.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Student performances and activities will reach a wider external audience. ✓ Students involved in Junior Programmes will be better supported and more closely connected to the RCM.
Benefits to the RCM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The RCM's digital materials will be more securely stored and available for future use. ✓ Increased connection with visitors and schools may improve student recruitment.

Strategic area 4	Community and wellbeing
Overall aim	To design and implement technology which benefits the RCM community, improving their individual and shared experience of the RCM by simplifying our digital services, digitally-enabling shared spaces and promoting increased collaboration.
RCM strategic context	"The [East Courtyard] redevelopment will facilitate creation of new social spaces, a new student restaurant and a cafe/bar, an interactive Museum of Music, two studio quality performance venues and technologically advanced spaces for rehearsals, exhibitions and music laboratories." (RCM in 2020 – a three-year vision for the RCM)
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  The intranet (Muse) will be replaced with a new mobile-first portal, where staff and students can quickly complete essential tasks and access important information, wherever they are. A public/visitor version of the portal app will provide up to date information for RCM visitors, focussed on information they require while in the building.  We will seek to increase access to RCM course content and learning resources for a diverse range of learners, with particular reference to latest <u>accessibility regulations</u> and the RCM's own Access and Participation policy.  Working with RCM Library, Performance & Programming and Digital Learning, we will provide students with access to digital score platforms and suitable loan hardware for use in teaching and performance.  Recognising the importance of the RCM's physical estate in supporting and fostering a creative learning community, we will invest in new technologies and flexible spaces with excellent Wi-Fi provision, where students and staff can work, participate and collaborate together using the devices and platforms they choose.  We will renew and expand digital signage around the campus to improve the experience for students, staff and visitors and to improve visibility and sharing of the vast range of activities happening in the many and varied RCM departments every day.  We will undertake a project to develop, trial and implement networked technologies as a realistic option for long-distance teaching, rehearsal and performance, in order to foster partnerships and external collaboration and promote environmentally-friendly alternatives to long-distance travel, including equipping 3 or 4 music rooms with suitable technologies.  Printing facilities, desktop PCs, telephony, Asimut (room booking) kiosks and teaching room AV systems will be renewed, with consideration of the evolving use of own devices and the impact that could have on both individual students and classroom teaching.  We will invest in digital programme note platform(s), aiming for at least 50% replacement of paper programmes by digital alternatives in the 2022/23 academic year.  The RCM will adopt a general principle of allowing 10% of Estates capital project budgets for technology requirements, rising to 15% in performance spaces and up to 50% for dedicated technology facilities such as recording studios.
Benefits to students and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Students and staff will be able to work more flexibly, in the way which suits their learning style, not just in practice rooms and classrooms but anywhere on the campus. ✓ The RCM will be easier to navigate and provide a more inclusive, accessible environment for talented students and staff, regardless of their background and needs.

Benefits to the RCM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ An improved sense of community, collaboration and shared creativity across the RCM.✓ Increase the accessibility and inclusivity of learning and teaching for all students.✓ Improved achievement of environmental targets and compliance.
---------------------	---

DIGITAL STRATEGY 2019-22 AT A GLANCE

‘Strengthening our digital foundations’

STRATEGIC AREAS

<p>1</p> <p>Learning, teaching and performance</p> <p>We will develop the RCM’s digital provision for teaching, learning and performance to match the high quality of its existing programmes and physical estate, ensuring all learners have access to the facilities and services they need and expect from a modern conservatoire.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Business sustainability and innovation</p> <p>We will ensure the RCM’s technology infrastructure and services are sufficiently robust, safe and up-to-date to support the organisation’s priorities, business continuity and sustainability, and exploit digital opportunities to reduce costs and generate income where possible.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Research, heritage and outreach</p> <p>We will protect, curate and share the RCM’s expertise, knowledge and heritage (especially its digital assets) through appropriate technologies, for the maximum benefit of current and future students, staff and external audiences.</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Community and wellbeing</p> <p>We will design and implement technology that benefits the RCM community, improving people’s individual and shared experience of the RCM by simplifying our digital services, digitally-enabling shared spaces and promoting increased collaboration.</p>
---	--	--	---

ENABLING THEMES

<p>A</p> <p>Developing a digital culture in the organisation</p>	<p>B</p> <p>Improving technology governance and compliance</p>	<p>C</p> <p>Improving digital capability and skills</p>	<p>D</p> <p>Securing ongoing investment in technology</p>
--	--	---	---

DELIVERY PRINCIPLES

- ✓ Data protection by design and default
- ✓ Increasing resilience and security
- ✓ Simplifying user experience & system architecture
- ✓ Delivering best value
- ✓ Adopting cloud platforms wherever possible
- ✓ Supporting environmental targets

Appendix 1: RCM Digital department structure and remit

The RCM Digital department was created in January 2018 to support and help deliver the previous digital strategy. It brought together three existing teams under the Artistic Director, managed by a new Head of Digital (replacing the previous Head of ICT and Head of Studios posts):

- Digital Technology (formerly ICT)
- Digital Production (RCM Studios)
- Digital Learning

The combined digital team provides the following services:

ICT infrastructure: supply and maintenance of data network and storage systems, Wi-Fi, desktop PCs, phones, printers, servers and software platforms. All College-wide software requirements, and the majority of specialist software requirements are delivered and managed centrally through the Technology budget. Hardware is supplied via a mixture of purchase and leasing arrangements, though overall the trend is towards leasing rather than purchase, leading to an increase in OpEx and reduction in large scale CapEx funding.

ICT support: the Technology Helpdesk serves staff and students operating 9-5, Monday to Friday. As well as supporting RCM hardware, software and platforms, the Helpdesk increasingly supports student/staff own devices. The Helpdesk also manages the equipment loan service, providing recording, filming and sound reinforcement equipment for students and laptops and projectors for staff use.

AV for teaching & learning: we provide and support AV facilities in the main academic teaching rooms including large touchscreen TVs, with dedicated PCs, good quality speakers for music playback.

Business Applications: the Business Applications manager in the Technology team is heavily involved in customising and implementing critical software platforms across both business and learning. This includes custom software development, interface design, maintenance, support and upgrading of major systems and the custom database which links essential platforms together.

Media production: RCM Studios is a well-established expert hub for the production of classical music recordings, films, soundtracks and livestreams. Its services are available to students, staff and commercial clients. RCM concerts, masterclasses and promotional films produced by the studios have been watched by over 2m viewers and achieved success on public platforms such as YouTube, Medici TV and Operavision.

Music technology: specialist technology for composers and performers is provided in facilities such as the composition and production suites (part of the studios) and Sibelius suite. These facilities have been impacted by the recent Courtyard development and are therefore in urgent need of renewal. Student numbers and the number of technically intensive courses have also increased, meaning we need to expand this provision to meet demand.

Performance support: RCM Studios provides technical support for all public performances and recital exams which require it – from basic sound reinforcement through to advanced electronics, video projection and networked performances linking multiple countries. The Britten Theatre has a specialist team to support opera productions and day-to-day operation.

Digital learning support: Digital Learning provides focussed support for the use of technology in teaching and learning, including the RCM's VLE (learn.rcm), internal media player (RCMstream) and videoconferencing programme.

Technology teaching and training courses: the Digital Learning team is increasingly involved in teaching of digital modules and training sessions for staff and students, bringing in a range of internal and external experts to provide up-to-date knowledge and skills covering areas such as recording, filming, livestreaming, electronic music, social media, digital scores, audience engagement and networked performance.

Appendix 2: Key messages collated from focus groups:

Training and Support

- Essential to success, for both staff and students
- Meaningful commitment, properly funded and supported at the top level
- Staff need to have the relevant skills to support and develop them in students
- Staff need time to undertake development and training
- Student training and provision should consider careers and future needs, not just success at College
- We need training to make better use of what we already have

Resources and Facilities

- Lack of resource limits ambition
- Media production facilities for students
- Support for a tablet deployment for students
- Flexible technology and workspaces wanted (laptops, docks, charging stations)
- Deploy more technology to cut paper use (tablets etc)
- Better integrated AV in key spaces – meetings, video conferencing, performance spaces
- One touch, simple interfaces
- Lecture capture and timely uploading
- Digital scores accessible to all
- New studios, better teaching room tech
- Better software offer to all students (Sibelius, Adobe, Logic etc)
- Proper data management and storage infrastructure
- Computer and AV in every teaching room
- Technology and the infrastructure to facilitate experimentation
- We should provide some industry standard workstations, students should be able to experience the highest quality equipment at times.
- Adequate staffing to better maintain and support existing facilities as well as new ones

Experience and Programmes

- Tech should always improve an experience, not complicate it
- Properly interact with college services simply, anywhere
- Mobile first approach
- AI for routine queries
- Improved SSO – fewer log in processes and passwords
- Integrated, simplified calendaring
- Digital skills should be an integrated and compulsory element of student programmes, not an “add on”
- Digital should drive the development of new courses
- Should be more production courses available and more opportunities to develop production skills
- Embrace emerging forms in courses – eg Music for games/Sound design
- Online offer to support on-site students and develop a “virtual student” market

Communication

- Technology is the key to effective communication
- Need more methods and tools to improve efficiency and effectiveness (e.g. less, or better targeted, email)
- Better dissemination of departmental work, digital resource offer between departments, students and the public through a broader variety of platforms
- Open access in research
- Key to reaching wider audiences, in the broadest sense of the word

Collaboration and integration

- Integrate the digital and non-digital rather than seeing them as separate
- Portal – streamline and simplify digital platforms
- Tech to facilitate cross team collaboration, modern file sharing methods
- Work harder to integrate and coordinate strategies (e.g. Digital and Estates)
- A proper digital platform for informal student collaboration and connections

Estate revenue and recruitment

- Consider the savings technology offers, as much as the cost
- Online courses offer a variety of benefits – more students, more revenue, global reach, easing physical space pressures

Ethos, Culture, Objectives

- Fear that we are not agile or open enough as an organisation to meet the challenges or seize the opportunities
- Need for clear direction and clarity of message from the top level
- Open access to social media and communication channels more broadly
- Getting the balance between encouragement and a requirement (mandating) for people to engage and develop
- We must be positive about the challenge and the opportunities
- Must be prepared to think differently
- Data driven reporting and decision making
- Levels of confidence and willingness in staff and students vary enormously
- We have a responsibility to own this change and deliver it for students, if we believe it is the right thing to do
- Develop adaptable and successful students with the ability to think critically and flexibly